



How can I protect myself?

HPV can be prevented through:

- Abstinence (not having ANY vaginal, anal, or oral sex)
- Avoidance of genital skin-to-skin contact
- Using condoms and dental dams the right way every time you have sex
- Limiting your partners (the safest option would be to have only one un-infected partner who only has sex with you)
- Avoiding alcohol or drug use because they may lead to risky sexual behavior
- Talking to your partner(s) about their sexual history

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CONVERSATION
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Vaccines are also available that help protect against some of the most common types of HPV.

Since vaccines prevent initial infection of HPV, the vaccine is protection against cancers that are caused by HPV. Talk to your doctor about vaccine recommendations.

HPV can cause some cancers, including cancer of the cervix, penis, vagina, anus, tongue, and throat.

Have an open and honest talk with your healthcare provider so they can evaluate the testing or treatment you may need.

For more information about HPV

Call your health care provider, your local health department, or contact



at

www.health.mo.gov
www.cdc.gov/std

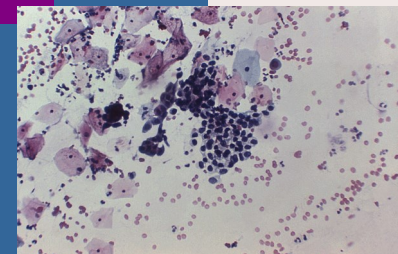
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Genital Warts and HPV



Know the facts!

HPV can cause cancer!

How can I find out if I am infected?

HPV (human papillomavirus) is the most common viral sexually transmitted disease. Most people infected do not know they have it because they show no signs or symptoms. **Which means you can get infected or infect someone else without even knowing it.**

How is HPV spread?

This viral infection is spread through vaginal, anal, or oral sex. However, a person DOES NOT have to engage in actual sexual intercourse to contract the virus. It can also be spread through direct, genital, skin-to-skin contact.

For an infection that does produce symptoms, genital warts would be the only visible sign.

Washing your genitals, urinating, or douching after sex will not protect you from getting HPV.

What are genital warts?

They are small growths caused by HPV. They appear on or near the genital, groin, or anal area.

- **In men** - they can appear on any part of the penis or scrotum, the groin, and the anal area.
- **In women** - they can appear on the outer vaginal area, the anal area, or even inside the vagina or on the cervix.

Genital warts may be:

- flat or rounded
- pink or skin-colored
- alone or in groups
- difficult to see

Some warts may itch or bleed. But usually, you will not feel them. Warts can also appear in your mouth if you have oral sex with an infected person.

Ask your healthcare provider about the HPV vaccine.

There are more than 40 types of HPV. Nearly ALL sexually active individuals will get an HPV infection at some point in their lifetime. In 90% of cases, the body's immune system will clear an HPV infection naturally within about two years.

Genital warts and herpes are different. The herpes virus can cause sores, not warts. If you have any signs of sores or warts, get tested for STDs.

There is currently no approved test for HPV. There are tests that can be used to screen for cervical cancer. Some men and women find out they have HPV when they get genital warts. Some women may find out they have HPV when they get an abnormal pap test result. Others may find out once they've developed more serious problems, such as cancers.

There is not a cure for HPV, but there is treatment for genital warts. Talk to your healthcare provider about those treatments.

DO NOT use any over-the-counter wart remedies. They are not meant for genital warts.

